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## Cross-contamination!

These are actual observations from restaurants: Chicken blood dripping into salad lettuce in the walk-in cooler; cutting raw beef for finger steaks then using the same board and knife for cutting cooked chicken breast for chicken caesar salad. You probably know of some examples from your own experience. If you don't, then you may have been lucky, or not observant enough, or all employees are well-trained.

Cross-contamination is defined in the UNICODE as getting ready-to-eat food contaminated with bacteria from raw, uncooked food. In the broad sense it is transferring bacteria from one food to another food.

Is putting spices into cooked ground beef a cross-contamination? How about adding a tomato slice and lettuce onto a sandwich? (Answers on following page.)

## Prevent cross-contamination!

### • **Wash your hands thoroughly.**

Where have your hands been today?

- To the bathroom,
- Petted the family dog?
- Changed a diaper.
- Tied your shoes.
- Drove to work?
- Are you blowing your nose?
- Shook hands with vendor or Environmental Health Specialist
- Put raw meat into the refrigerator.

### • **Separation.**

Is the walk-in cooler divided into areas where salad ingredients are apart from raw meats?

Are cooked foods stored above uncooked foods?

Cleaning agents, chemicals stored apart from foods and food-contact equipment?

*cont...*

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### **Eggs.**

Raw, shell eggs may not be used except in cooked foods for healthy, low susceptible consumers. Substitute liquid pasteurized eggs for Caesar salad dressing, hollandaise sauce, ice cream or eggnog or in cooked foods **in nursing homes, hospitals, childcare.**

### **Spices.**

Unless heat treated or irradiated, spices may have bacteria in them. A restaurant made people sick with their practice of adding spices and raw bell pepper to taco meat after it was cooked but still warm. An unwashed tomato or lettuce is a source of contamination also.

### **Fruits and Vegetables - Wash your Produce.**

Remember that vegetables and melons may be growing close to the ground. It is possible for fecal matter in irrigation water to get on the produce. Contamination may come from the hands of pickers. The California State Health Director reminded consumers to thoroughly wash the outer skin of cantaloupes before cutting them. *Salmonella poona* made 39 persons ill in five western states in April, 2000.

FDA has shown that rinsing fruits and vegetables in warm or cold water helps reduce the presence of pathogens and dirt and pesticides.

### **Refrigerated Storage:**

From top shelf to bottom shelf  
Cooked Ready to Eat  
Uncooked Ready to Eat (salads)  
Raw Meat  
Raw Fish  
Raw Poultry

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**High Risk?** Food Establishments are classified as a high or medium risk. The classification is in Appendix A of the UNICODE. It is based on the amount and nature of food handling/preparation occurring in the establishment. Owners and operators must realize that there is indeed a risk to public health the more food is handled and taken through the temperature "Danger Zone". **What is your risk????**

**What's the Score?** During the previous six months, the six most common Critical Violations found in restaurants were #22 unclean food contact surfaces, #32 lack of handsoap/paper towels at handsinks, #41 lack of labels on toxic chemical bottles or improper storage of chemicals, #30 cross-connection (lack of air gap or anti-siphon device), #3 improper food temperatures, #20 lack of proper sanitizing of equipment/dishes

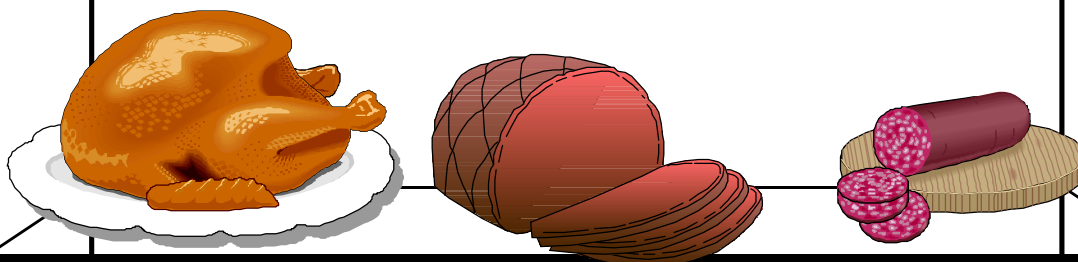
During the last six months the most common Non-Critical Violations were item #37. #23. #8, #15, #17, #33 and #5 (tie).

*Food Review is sent quarterly, free of charge to all licensed food establishments in our health district. We hope to include news of interest and importance. Topic ideas or articles written by the readers are welcome to be sent to: Editor, Food Review, CDHD, 707 N. Armstrong Pl., Boise, ID 83704. Extra copies of the newsletter are available at your local Health Department office.*

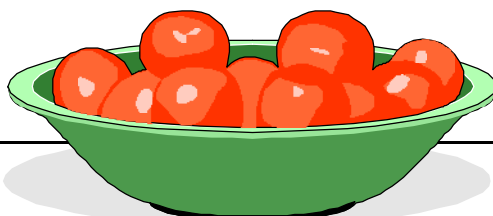


# CROSS

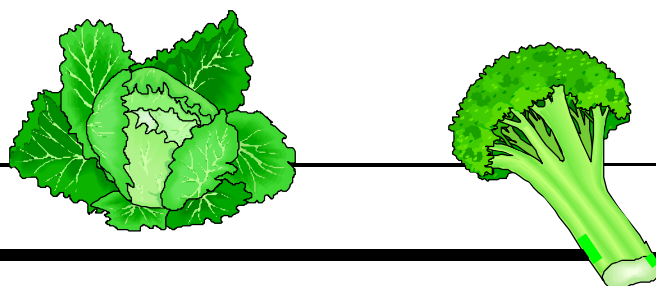
Cooked  
Ready to eat



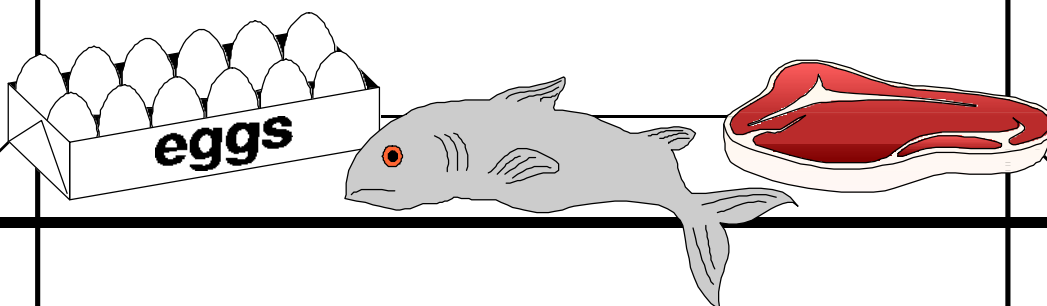
Washed  
Produce



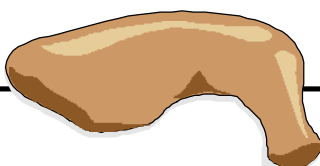
Unwashed  
Produce



Beef,  
Fish,  
Pork,



Poultry



# CONTAMINATION



Central District Health Department  
Environmental Health  
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## FOOD REview

## TRAINING

The State Food Protection Program has approved a new training presentation for the Health Districts to use. Central District Health is using it in our Basic and Advanced Food Protection Classes. Phone 327-7499 to reserve a space or register on our website at [www.cdhd.org](http://www.cdhd.org)

### Schedule for **Basic Classes in 2000/01:**

October 24, 2000  
November 15, 2000  
December 14, 2000  
February 13, 2001  
March 17, 2001

Cost \$5/person

Class is 8:30 a.m. - 10:30 a.m.

### Schedule for **Advanced Classes in 2001:**

January 14, 2001  
April 17, 2001

Cost \$5/person

Class is 8:30 a.m. - 11:00 a.m.